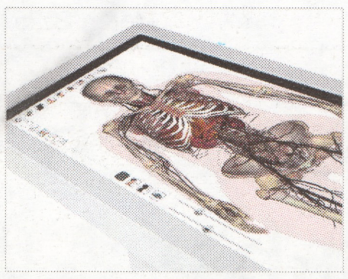

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Washtenaw Community College
ON THE RECORD

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Stronger together

Industry partnerships for a highly skilled workforce

By FRAN LEFORT
Director of Media Relations

Tom Butman is a prime example of a Washtenaw Community College employer partner who is "all in." Butman's family business – Gene Butman Ford in Ypsilanti – currently employs 10 WCC alumni full-time. As an industry advisory board member at WCC for the past 12 years, Butman helps to guide the college's curriculum to meet workforce needs.

The dealership's general manager, Butman also happens to be a proud alumnus of WCC. Though he studied accounting and earned a degree from Northwood University, Butman enrolled in WCC's Automotive Services Technician program for four semesters to gain a deeper understanding of every aspect of his family's business.

Butman offers work-study apprenticeships and part-time work for students, tuition reimbursement, hosts WCC class tours and more.

He recently participated in the WCC-hosted industry panel discussion at the Detroit Auto Show alongside college President Dr. Rose B. Bellanca, MichAuto's Executive Director Glenn Stevens and DTE executive Neal T. Foley.

Among other things, Butman noted how WCC produces top talent and is on the cutting edge of the evolving auto industry.

"I think the number one thing that I really appreciate about WCC is the amount of communication between us in the business sector and WCC in the education sector. We can all get into our silos and have our own ideas, but with our partnership I feel heard," Butman said. "The business world needs more connections with the education world. With more communication we are both able to grow."

TOP PHOTO: WCC President Dr. Rose B. Bellanca (left) and Tom Butman, General Manager of Gene Butman Ford in Ypsilanti, collaborated during an electric vehicle panel discussion at the 2025 Detroit Auto Show Mobility Global Forum. (Photo by J.D. Scott)

BOTTOM PHOTO: Butman (far right) with WCC alumni who work for him, including (front row, from left) Jake Santilli, Chance Lowell, Valerie Allen, Dominic Porta, Robert Hunt, (back row, from left) Chris Machalk, Blair Allen, Tim Parish, Nicole Hodkins and Christian Johnson. (Photo by J.D. Scott)

Butman Ford's WCC alumni work in all areas of the business, including service, parts, sales, and the business and human resources departments.

The longtime Ypsilanti dealership is only one example of how WCC works with local business and industry.

The college partners with numerous other employers and manufacturers – such as Toyota North America, which is the anchor company in the Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education apprenticeship program.

In addition to the Transportation Technologies area, industry representatives also sit on numerous advisory boards to help shape the advanced manufacturing, health care and other programs. In the Health Sciences Division, employers play a critical role in providing clinical partnerships for hands-on education in medical settings.

Additionally, WCC's Center for Career Success partners with employers to assist in student recruitment, including hosting career fairs for all students, and program-specific job fairs.

The college also manages an app that serves as a networking platform for employers to connect with over 40,000 WCC students and alumni. ●

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Moving Michigan forward

All roads lead to opportunity

By DR. ROSE B. BELLANCA
WCC President

At Washtenaw Community College, all roads lead to developing a highly skilled and talented workforce, positioning our region and state as a leader and magnet for industry – and keeping our talent right here in the mitten.

Our community expects this of us, which is why we partner with industry to understand their needs and offer programs that develop a rich pool of skilled talent.

WHAT DOES MICHIGAN NEED?

According to Michigan's Career Outlook through 2032, compiled by the state's center for Data and Analytics, many good-paying jobs will require at least an associate degree, licensure or post-secondary credential. Significant demand exists for healthcare and information technology jobs as well as vital skilled trades jobs.

MORE GOOD NEWS

Washtenaw Community College offers a wide range of short-term academic degree and certificate programs, apprenticeships, and specialized professional development and workforce training programs to help students fill this demand. This often means that in two years or less – and sometimes in just weeks – students can earn a degree or credential at WCC to qualify for a higher wage in-demand job.

See **MICHIGAN FORWARD** page 4.

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Washtenaw Community College strives to make a positive difference in people's lives through accessible and excellent educational programs and services.

On the Record is written and designed by the WCC Marketing and Communications Department, Washtenaw Community College, 4800 E. Huron River Dr., Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105-4800.

Questions about the WCC programs and services described in this publication should be directed to the Office of Admissions at 734-973-3543.

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WCC President

Anatomage table brings high-tech learning to WCC's Biology labs

By FRAN LeFORT
Director of Media Relations

A national cadaver shortage has ushered in a new high-tech education and training pathway for students in Washtenaw Community College's Biology Department.

The college's new Anatomage table is a 7-foot touchscreen platform offering five digitized human cadavers and medical learning tools to enhance depth and breadth of the student learning experience.

The WCC Foundation provided a $125,000 grant to purchase the table, which offers access to digitized layers of skin, tissue, muscular, vascular, endocrine, organ and skeletal systems, and more.

Faculty members have been training on the table and will soon introduce the new technology into classrooms for student learning.

The college has maintained a cadaver lab for years through an agreement with the University of Michigan. The last remaining cadaver at WCC is set to be returned at the end of the current semester. A shortage has made securing future cadavers a challenge for educational settings nationwide.

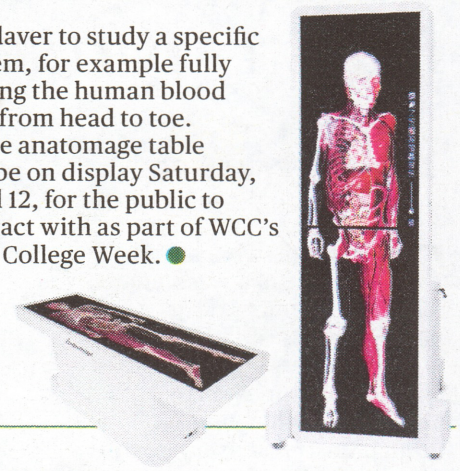
"This is the next best thing and will be a phenomenal resource for our students. It's a great opportunity for them to be really engaged," said Tracy Schwab, Ph.D., Dean of the Mathematics, Science and Engineering Technology Division.

WCC Foundation Board Chair Bhushan Kulkarni (third from left) and WCC President Dr. Rose B. Bellanca (left) receive a demonstration of the new Anatomage table by Susan Dentel (second from left), Life Sciences faculty member, and Tracy Schwab (right), Dean of the Mathematics, Science and Engineering Technology Division. (Photo by Rebecca R. Thomas)

"Among the many advantages is everything is based on real humans – not artist's renderings – and because it is all digitized there is nothing you can accidentally delete or cut. If you make a wrong cut, you can go back," she said.

The touchscreens provide for a more immersive and interactive learning experience. It allows students to zoom in for closer looks and easily remove layers of a cadaver to study a specific system, for example fully tracing the human blood flow from head to toe.

The anatomage table will be on display Saturday, April 12, for the public to interact with as part of WCC's Free College Week.



Earn, work and learn

WCC's apprenticeships and skilled trades learning

An HVAC-R student forms ductwork during a WCC class. HVAC and refrigeration mechanics and installers jobs are among those expected to grow in Michigan. (Photo by J.D. Scott)

By FRAN LeFORT
Director of Media Relations

The demand for highly skilled workers is on the rise, and Washtenaw Community College has become well-known as a destination for hands-on trades and apprenticeship training.

According to the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, approximately 45,500 of the state's 520,000 professional trades positions will need to be filled by 2030.

WCC offers a robust advanced manufacturing program, training workers for jobs in CNC machining, automation, industrial electronics, robotics and mechatronics. A 2024 Deloitte Insights report predicts 1.9 million unfilled U.S. manufacturing jobs by 2033 if the skills gap persists. In February 2024 alone, there were over 86,000 manufacturing job postings with an average starting salary of $71,700, according to a state workforce report.

One example of a WCC program fueling this highly skilled, in-demand job pipeline is the college's HVAC program. According to the recent "Michigan Hot 50 Jobs Outlook Through 2023," jobs such as HVAC and refrigeration mechanics and installers are projected to grow 4.6%, with annual wages between $45,760-$66,560.

Consider the 6,000 skilled trades men and women traveling across the country – and even internationally – to descend upon WCC's campus each summer to hone their skills.

While their primary summer programs utilize WCC's top-notch facilities to "train the trainers," who then go to their home locals to train membership, many of these seasoned union workers take advantage of WCC's year-round online academic courses to earn a degree or certificate. Since 2000, for example, 1,750 members of the United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters have earned a college certificate or degree at WCC.

Also, each of the six trade unions that host in-depth trainings at WCC every summer offers their own apprenticeship program for their newer workers. Many of these apprentices take WCC courses online. In 2023-24, 446 UA apprentices and 4,029 Sprinkler Fitter apprentices, who fall under the UA membership, completed online courses at WCC.

See **EARN, WORK, LEARN** page 4.

Michigan's mobility workforce

By FRAN LeFORT
Director of Media Relations

Washtenaw Community College (WCC) has been awarded nearly $2 million from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to advance the mobility sector through semiconductor and battery education and training.

The MEDC grants will support a new associate degree and several specialized certificates, creating pathways to in-demand careers and seamless transfers to institutions such as the University of Michigan.

Semiconductors power everything from kitchen appliances and smartphones to modern vehicles, making expertise in this field more critical than ever.

"WCC is proud to support Michigan's mobility workforce through education and training. Thanks to the MEDC, these new semiconductor and battery programs will prepare students for successful and exciting careers in this growing, high-demand job area," said college President Dr. Rose B. Bellanca.

An Associate of Applied Science in Engineering Technology will offer two concentrations – Semiconductor & Battery Manufacturing and Industrial Electronics – with four embedded certificates.

Additionally, WCC will launch a new 18-credit standalone advanced certificate in Semiconductor & Battery Manufacturing, along with a short-term, non-credit training program designed to reskill incumbent workers.

Michigan accounts for one-fifth of the U.S. automotive industry's semiconductor demand and is well-positioned to lead in semiconductor manufacturing.

The state's semiconductor industry ranks among the top 10 nationally, with an 11% projected job growth over the next five years.

The average semiconductor salary in Michigan is $78,497, with a wide range depending on job role (ZipRecruiter).

Fueling Michigan's talent pipeline

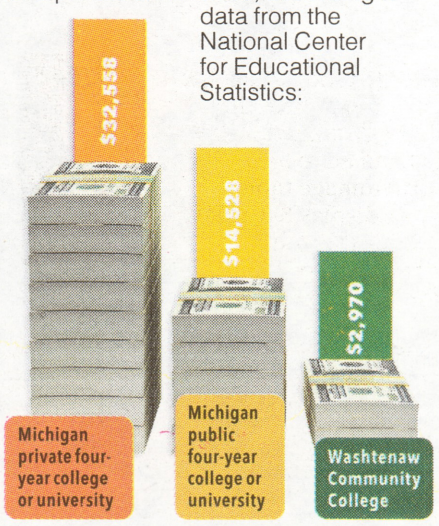
AFFORDABILITY

Tuition and fees at Washtenaw Community College continue to be among the lowest among Michigan community colleges with the total cost for WCC students consistently ranking in the lowest quartile.

The WCC Board of Trustees unanimously approved a tuition freeze at **$99 per credit for on-campus courses** and **$112 per credit for distance learning courses** for in-district students.

Over the past 10 years, in-district, on-campus tuition has increased just $5 per credit (4.2%) and distance learning $6 per credit (5.6%). The rate of inflation over the same time period is roughly 33%.

WCC's annual cost of attendance of $2,970 for a full-time class load is a fraction of the cost students pay on average at the state's four-year public and private universities, according to data from the National Center for Educational Statistics:



AWARDS GRANTED

The number of **WCC degrees and certificates granted** continues to soar thanks to multiple completion strategies.

In the last complete academic year (2023-24), **2,095 certificates** were awarded and **1,460 associate degrees** were earned.

According to MI School Data, WCC enrolled 7% of all degree-seeking community college students in Michigan, yet produced 11.4% of all awards.

SUCCESS GUARANTEE

WCC graduates are ready to join the workforce or transfer to a four-year institution. **It's a guarantee!**

In short, a WCC Board of Trustees policy states that if a student with a WCC degree isn't prepared for the next step in their lives — be it entry-level employment or pursuing a bachelor's degree — they can **retake courses tuition-free**.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

Along with continually growing its connection to local K-12 school districts, WCC charters **Washtenaw Technical Middle College**, one of the largest and most successful early middle colleges in the nation.

In addition to WTMC, WCC has partnered in **early middle college** opportunities in Ypsilanti, Dexter, Plymouth/Canton, Livingston County and Kensington Woods over the past decade.

In Fall 2024, WCC welcomed a total of **1,489 dual-enrolled students** from 76 different high schools. That number accounts for 13.3% of WCC's enrollment.

What's in a number?

How WCC deploys its educational programs to change lives and drive the local workforce

Whether preparing students for success as a transfer student to a four-year institution or training them for direct employment in a high-wage and high-demand career, Washtenaw Community College's mission to make a positive difference in peoples' lives is at the core of everything we do.

Data points shown on this page demonstrate how WCC meets the talent needs of employers, supports the success of our students, and builds prosperity in our community.

According to jobs forecasts and employer feedback, WCC places a premium on building a future workforce with technology literacy, problem-solving skills, and hands-on abilities. Because we partner with industry and listen to their needs, WCC stays ahead of their workforce demands.

WCC educates students for direct employment or transfer programs that feed top-growing careers identified by the *Career Outlook Through 2032* report published by the State of Michigan. Just a few of them, for example: physical therapist assistants, software developers and quality assurance analysts, registered nurses, CNC tool programmers, information security analysts, surgical technologists and HVAC & refrigeration mechanics and installers.

"We continually adapt education and training to meet today's and tomorrow's workforce demands," said WCC President Dr. Rose B. Bellanca. "There is no way we could get ahead of the future needs and prepare students if we weren't in lockstep with employers who sit on our program advisory boards and help drive curriculum and skills-based programs to feed their talent needs."

Check out these data points from the 2023-24 academic year and see for yourself! ●

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Washtenaw Community College → University of Michigan

WCC transfers more students to the University of Michigan than any other college or university. Over the last 10 years, **transfers from WCC to U-M have increased 74%** (from 154 to 268).

Over the last five years, **16,761 WCC alumni enrolled in 1,147 different colleges and universities** throughout Michigan and the country. While a majority stay close to home (51% to Eastern Michigan University, University of Michigan or Michigan State University), others attend prestigious universities like Stanford, Harvard and Yale.

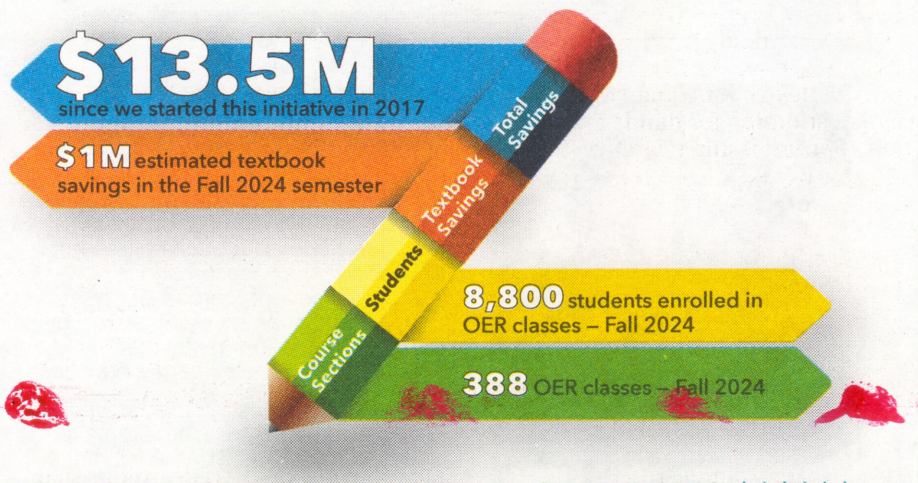
COMMUNITY LEARNING

Each April, WCC hosts **Free College Week**, an opportunity to serve and engage the community that supports it by providing high quality learning experiences at no cost.

Last year, **921 individuals enrolled in 5,041 classes.** In all, 137 different classes were offered virtually during the week and on-campus over the weekend.

GATHERING PLACE

The recently renovated Morris Lawrence Building on the WCC campus is a vital community space for meetings, conferences and performances. Last year, the college's Conference Services department supported **4,656 external events** and welcomed **93,120 visitors** to campus.


$13.5M
since we started this initiative in 2017
Total Savings
$1M estimated textbook savings in the Fall 2024 semester
Textbook Savings
Students
8,800 students enrolled in OER classes – Fall 2024
Course Sections
388 OER classes – Fall 2024

TEXTBOOK ALTERNATIVES SAVE STUDENTS $$$$$$

WCC's program to help students earn degrees, certificates and general education credits with little or no textbook costs has **recently surpassed the $13.5 million savings mark**.

The college started its open educational resources (OER) program in 2017. Instead of traditional textbooks that can cost hundreds of dollars, students use free, high-quality OERs adapted by WCC faculty to fit specifically with their course.

In Fall 2024 alone, **more than 8,800 students utilized OERs** in **388 different course sections** to **save $1,005,533.76** in new textbook costs.

The college also **added two Z-Degrees** last fall and now offers students three different associate degree programs and multiple certificate programs that can be completed without ever purchasing a textbook.

TRADE UNIONS

WCC supported instructor and apprentice training — both in-person and online — for **nearly 12,500 members of six different national trades unions** last year. This includes approximately 6,000 members who attend instructor training on WCC's campus each summer.

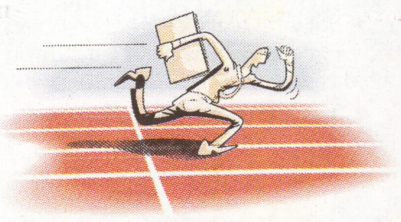
The on-campus summer training programs bring an **estimated $20 million in economic impact** to the community, in addition to the college's **$525 million** estimated overall annual economic impact on the region.

MICHIGAN RECONNECT

RECONNECT SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

The Michigan Reconnect Scholarship was launched in the Fall of 2020, originally to help adults 25 and older return to college and earn a degree. The program was expanded for a limited time to lower the age to 21.

WCC has enrolled a total of 5,198 students through the Reconnect Scholarship since the program launched. This includes 4,086 students ages 25+ and 1,112 students ages 21-24.



FAST-TRACK LEARNING

Last year, community members enrolled in **8,062 non-credit fast-track job training and professional development courses** offered by WCC's Workforce & Community Development department.

Fast-track job training courses are aligned with industry certifications and offer a way to quickly earn the skills and/or credentials that employers want.

Professional development classes are offered in categories such as data analytics, digital marketing, finance & accounting, human resources and more.

MICHIGAN FORWARD

continued from cover

Gina Thompson, a graduate of the WCC Physical Therapist Assistant program, works with a young patient at Oxford Recovery Center in Brighton. PTA jobs are projected to increase by 21% in Michigan. (Photo by J.D. Scott)

For example, the demand for CNC tool programmers is expected to grow 13%, while the need for physical therapist assistants is projected to increase by more than 21%.

For those interested in an information technology pathway, there are a wide range of jobs in computer information systems analysis, user support and software development, where moderate to high growth is expected. These jobs also have a median salary range of $45,760 to $72,800 annually for full-time work.

Additionally, many of the credits students earn to secure jobs like these are stackable toward a degree, setting them on a transfer path to earn a future bachelor's degree and greater prosperity.

YOUR EDUCATION SUPERHIGHWAY

I often refer to WCC as an education superhighway, with multiple entry points and exits to support a student's education and career journey. Whether you are just getting started, looking to change careers or advancing within a current profession with additional skills, there is a path for you here.

Let us help you find it at wccnet.edu/enroll. ●

EARN, WORK, LEARN

continued from pg. 2

WCC also partners with 21 companies to offer hands-on earn, work-and-learn opportunities in 14 occupations. Currently 74 student apprentices are employed, with the goal of placing 100 next year. Apprentices' average age is 29.

WCC partners with employers in a number of hands-on apprenticeship opportunities for students:

- **Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education** - WCC is the only college in Michigan participating in this national apprenticeship program in which regional industry partners hire students who work three days a week and take classes together on campus two days a week.
- **U. S. Department of Labor programs** - Currently, WCC has placed student apprentices at Toyota of Ann Arbor and the YMCA, with other partnerships in development.
- **Employer-sponsored apprenticeships** - WCC works with employers to customize programs aligning with employer needs. For example, ZOLLER Inc. offers an Advanced Manufacturing apprenticeship, and the University of Michigan Health System hires information technology apprentices.
- **Grant funded apprenticeships** - WCC manages and supports apprenticeship-related grants, including Apprenticeship Building America and Closing the Skills Gap. ●

What do you call someone who attended WCC? Employed!©

At Washtenaw Community College, we take great pride in seeing the achievements of our graduates, especially as they secure or advance in their respective careers or transfer to pursue a bachelor's degree. Whether you are a newly minted high school grad or an adult learner featured in the success stories that follow, WCC is here to help you prepare for that dream job.

With more than 130 degree and certificate programs, half of which are available entirely online, WCC helps students prepare to start careers, change careers or advance within their current professions. In fact, more than 9% of our students already have a degree and come to WCC to learn something new or to hone a skill set. We hope you enjoy reading about the successes of these WCC grads.

ZACH VAN BUREN
Senior Automotive Technician

WCC has not only helped Zach Van Buren launch a fulfilling career with Toyota North America, but it has paved the way for him to give back through mentoring new students just like him.

After surviving a serious car accident, Van Buren enrolled in WCC in 2021 with a deep desire to be a part of helping to protect other drivers and passengers. He earned a Transportation Technologies associate degree, went on to pursue a bachelor's degree in engineering at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and today is a senior automotive technician in Toyota's Integrated Vehicles Division. Van Buren evaluates, tests and helps develop Toyota's advance driver assistance systems.

While a WCC student, Van Buren served an internship with the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, where he worked in the Autonomous and Connected Vehicles test environment. This experience led to his first job at May Mobility, a start-up in the autonomous space, and, eventually, to Toyota.

Van Buren continues to give back to WCC and its students, serving as a Toyota mentor in the new FAME apprenticeship program with WCC.

Automotive Engineering Technicians in Michigan
- Median Salary: $62,030
- Job Growth: 9% (through 2030)

*Source: O*Net Salary & Job Trends*

MIKE RUDISILL
Engineering Technician

After serving in the Marines, Mike Rudisill took full advantage of the educational opportunities offered at Washtenaw Community College. He maximized his time – talking with instructors, playing with robots in the lab, helping others and watching extra instructional videos.

The conversations and connections proved valuable. Today, Rudisill leads a team at an innovative tech company focusing on future vehicle technology. He is an engineering technician at Quantum Signal AI, a Ford subsidiary, in Saline, where he fabricates 3D-printed camera mounts, mills custom electrical enclosures to survive the elements and much more with the goal of advancing smart infrastructure and improving driver experiences.

Rudisill earned a Mechatronics associate degree with a focus/certification in CNC/CAD/CAM. "The compound effect of extra experience and repetition of practicing what we were learning helped me get more out of it," he said. "That's how I got hired at this job. The CEO came to WCC and wanted to talk to instructors and get a short list of students."

Mechatronics Engineers in Michigan
- Median Salary: $97,735
- Entry-Level/Low Range Salary: $56,551
- Job Growth: 325 annual openings

Source: EMSI

HAJAR ELHADY
Radiologic Technologist

A mother of four children who is also caring for her parents, Hajar Elhady is one of the thousands of adult learner students at Washtenaw Community College. Last Fall, nearly 40% of WCC's student population was between the ages of 22 and 39, with another 10 percent over 40.

Hajar credits WCC and her instructors with not just providing a solid education and training for an in-demand career but also with understanding her life responsibilities to help her succeed.

By the time she completed her Radiography associate degree, Elhady had already earned 2,000 clinical hours in a hospital setting, valuable hands-on training taking care of patients that prepared her for the high-skill field.

Radiologic Technicians in Michigan
- Median Salary: $65,936
- Entry-Level/Low Range Salary: $51,511
- Job Growth: 437 annual openings

Source: EMSI

ASHLEY HUDOK
Future Occupational Therapist

Ashley Hudok is a Washtenaw Community College student completing prerequisites for a master's in occupational therapy. She previously earned a bachelor's degree in Secondary Education and is now pursuing a second career. Her passion for occupational therapy was inspired by her daughter's developmental therapy journey and her own recovery from a brain injury.

Hudok says WCC's affordability, supportive faculty and hands-on learning make returning to college as an adult much easier. "Everyone's really encouraging and supportive," she said. "Adult learners are stretched kind of thin, but (the instructors) know when we're here, they make the most of our time, and they really just want us to succeed."

She sees occupational therapy as a high-demand, rewarding career with strong growth potential. Michigan projects a 12% job growth over the next decade, driven by increasing demand for rehabilitation services.

Occupational Therapists in Michigan
- Median Salary: $99,676
- Entry-Level/Low Range Salary: $95,867
- Job Growth: 12% over next 10 years

Source: salary.com

Apply today at wccnet.edu/enroll

Washtenaw Community College